

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

Senate Bill 500

(Senator M. Washington)

Education, Energy, and the Environment

Ways and Means

Education - Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund - Alterations

This bill alters the qualifications for an award from the Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund to include an individual who has committed to work in an approved child care setting for at least 20 hours per week for a period of time determined by the Office of Child Care (OCC) within the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) after completing a required course of study. The bill requires awards from the fund to be prioritized to the following applicants: (1) an applicant who has not completed any college courses for credit from an accredited college or university and (2) an applicant who attends (or has been accepted) by an accredited college or university that offers native language or bilingual coursework in early childhood education (or a related field). An award recipient must repay OCC the funds received if the recipient does not perform the service obligation. However, the repayment may be waived or deferred if the recipient provides satisfactory evidence of extenuating circumstances (*e.g.*, illness or disability) that prevent the recipient from fulfilling the service obligation. The bill applies only prospectively. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MSDE can implement the required changes with existing resources. Revenues are not materially affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: The Child Care Career and Professional Development Fund within MSDE may award funding to an individual who has:

- obtained at least a level two in the [Maryland Child Care Credential Program](#);
- documented at least one year of experience working with groups of children in an approved setting; and
- been accepted by an accredited college or university for enrollment in at least one course for credit toward a degree in early childhood education or related field.

An award may only be:

- applied toward the cost of (1) tuition and fees or (2) textbooks required by a course in which the awardee is enrolled; and
- used by the awardee for the actual expense of college coursework incurred subsequent to an award to the completion of (1) a college degree in early childhood education or a related field or (2) developmental coursework required to meet prerequisites for a degree program in early childhood education or a related field.

Additional Comments: MSDE advises that the fiscal 2025 budget as introduced does not include funding for the program.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: HB 600 (Delegate Palakovich Carr) - Ways and Means.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 6, 2024
js/jkb Third Reader - March 1, 2024

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